



Press Note

The Telugu version of “I AM A SURVIVOR” authored by renowned oncologist Dr Vijay Anand Reddy, released!

- **Dr Sangita Reddy, Shri Venkatapathi Raju & Ms Rakul Preet Singh release the book**
- **It's a collection of powerful voices & stories of hope & inspiration of 108 cancer survivors**

Hyderabad, August 4th, 2019: The Telugu version of the I AM A SURVIVOR - “నీవు నీవు నీవు”, a compendium of real life and awe inspiring stories of courageous cancer survivors, authored by renowned Oncologist and Director, Apollo Cancer Hospital, **Dr Vijay Anand Reddy**, was formally released, on Sunday. **Dr Sangita Reddy**, Jt. Managing Director, Apollo Hospitals; Former ace left arm spinner **Shri Venkatapathi Raju** and Tollywood diva **Ms Rakul Preet Singh**, **Mr Vijay Kumar**, publisher, EMESCO books, the publishers of the book, released it at a program attended by the who's who of the city and brave cancer survivors.

Dr Vijay Anand Reddy, a cancer specialist with immense faith in his ability to provide succor to cancer patients, had the daunting task of conveying the bad word 'cancer' to patients and their near and dear. This pronouncement invariably led the patients to a sense of deep remorse, depression and a feeling of distraught with life. This desperate state of the patients seemed to haunt him to no end. He knew that most cancers are treatable with the advances in medicine and what was needed from the patient was the ability to be remain unfazed as far as possible from the impending agony and to bravely combat it. His experience in treating such patients dictated that a positive frame of mind could mitigate the trauma and help conquer cancer.

He had no readymade solutions on how to impress upon the patients in their moment of immense despair, the need to maintain composure and battle it out with a tough frame of mind. He also realised that no amount of counseling, consoling and attempts to boost their spirit, by the doctor, helps to allay their pain beyond a point. It was during such attempts to counsel patients that he realised the need to pen the experiences of some of the warriors of cancer, who could successfully decimate the disease and are a true inspiration to every cancer patient. The original English version took Dr Vijay Anand Reddy, aided by his wife Dr Sashi, over 3 years of toil, sparing most evenings and late nights, after a busy practice through the day, to compile I AM A SURVIVOR.

Speaking on the occasion **Ms Rakul Preet Singh** addressing the cancer survivors in the audience, said, *all of you are the real heroes, not us, we just portray different character. The moment we refer to cancer it is related to death, it's a shocking word. I am glad that this book has been put together to tell so many inspiring stories and give everyone courage to combat the disease. Congratulate all of you for winning over the dreaded disease and wish you all a very happy and healthy life.*

Though I had great satisfaction of giving back to the community a strong message on cancer being after all conquerable and thereby build a sense of resilience in the

patients to fight the disease, there was always this thought lurking in me that the book is still not in the reach of a vast majority of patients. That made me to embark on translating it into Telugu, now many more cancer patients can battle the disease confidently, taking a leaf from these inspiring stories, says **Dr Vijay Anand Reddy**. Dr Reddy, dedicated the book to his brave patients and his mother Mrs Damayanthi Devi, whom he lost recently. Dr Vijay Anand Reddy addressing the cancer survivors, said, you taught me more than what I read during my post-graduation to do oncology, you gave life to this book and I learnt treating you more than I learnt in my life. Thank you all for being part of my journey. Patients when diagnosed with cancer come to me in a desolate state, totally distraught about it being a death sentence, even after the disease is cured they are haunted of its relapse. It is to alleviate such thoughts and fears in the minds of patients I have come out with this book speaking true stories of survivors. Today two-thirds of cancers are cured, though its difficult to believe. In movies the best way they resort to, to get rid of a character is to portray him with cancer. But positive attitude and the grit to fight the disease can rid patients of cancer and lead a normal life thereafter. Any patient with any cancer, anywhere in the world can relate their distress to these patients in the book and gain confidence, as it is coming from the patient himself who endured the disease and presenting his perspective. This is the only book in the world having more than hundred stories of all kinds of cancers. The book as a matter of fact turned out to be the best in the world for cancer patients to seek much needed solace. He concluded by saying "Though cancer is devastating, What Cancer Cannot Do - It cannot cripple love, It cannot shatter hope, It cannot corrode faith, It cannot silence courage, It cannot invade the soul, It cannot steal eternal life, It cannot conquer the spirit."

Ms Sangita Reddy said, cancer is curable, the treatment options are many. Though the battle is fought by the doctors, the technology, but most significantly is the patients themselves and their relatives. Therefore giving patients and families the strength by sharing the stories of survivors is the most wonderful thing to do. Incidence of cancer in our country is huge, therefore the battle is very significant. Every 8 seconds a lady is diagnosed with cervical cancer somewhere in the world. One in eight women across India will have breast cancer. Every year in India about 11.5 lakh patients, who are no longer patients and are cancer survivors. So more and more people are conquering cancer and becoming cancer survivors. But instead of sharing statistics, treatment modalities, I am happy that Dr Vijay Anand Reddy shared stories of individual heroes, these heroes give not only courage and encouragement to others who had cancer. Not many are aware that Steve Jobs had cancer for nine years while he was the head of Apple, he brought out some of his most successful products. Many patients overcame cancer and led a near normal life thereafter.

Shri Venkatapathi Raju said, thanks to movies, they always portrayed cancer in such a negative way, that you are never expected to survive. But because of Doctors like Dr Vijay Anand Reddy, we can see smile on the faces of cancer survivors. The essence is that the survivors have shown the will power and grit to overcome the disease.

"I AM A SURVIVOR" shares powerful voices and stories of hope and inspiration of 108 cancer survivors. The book gives the readers a rare insight into the courageous and heartfelt voyage of these patients, the initial helplessness and a despondent state of mind, how they recover from the jolt they experience on hearing the dreaded word cancer, pick up the pieces of their lives from scratch and gradually transform into incredibly strong cancer survivors.

The book is replete with the stories of several brave hearts who proved without doubt that cancer which is thought to be invincible, can be vanquished with sheer

will power. Here is the gist of a few stories, which transformed from heart wrenching saga to a happy outcome.

An young lady walks into my clinic with fear and despair and pleads Doctor garu, please cure my disease and make me live till my children education is done! Not only her children education is done but her children are married and she is joyfully playing with her grandchildren.

An young 25 yr old man walks in and says Doctor uncle I just started my job! I have so many aspirations to fulfill and take care of parents. Please do something I want to live! I do not want to die! He is happily living with his wife and children and also taking care of his parents.

An young 14 year girl walks into my clinic along with her mother. Doctor uncle everyone in the family are crying! Am I going to die? Am I going to lose my leg? There is no treatment to make me come out this? She has gone through the treatment and emerged victorious! Also She has her legs intact! She is now pursuing her Fashion designer dream!

A 33 year lady diagnosed of breast cancer was unstoppable crying and crying and says I thought of committing suicide yesterday doctor. I do not want to undergo this horrifying and torturing cancer treatment Any way I am going to die!!

Narrating his experiences and what went into compiling this book, Dr Vijay Anand Reddy said, there are several such emotional touching and powerful stories seen and felt throughout my career. They start losing the battle before they actually begin to fight. I thought there should be some way to deal with this fear from cancer diagnosis, treatment and fear of not getting cured!

When a doctor says to a patient that everything will be fine. It doesn't appeal to the patient so much. When it comes from a patient who has gone through this journey successfully, it will make wonders!! certainly make a significant impact on the newly diagnosed patient.

Keeping this in mind I started talking to patients who come to my office even after they are cured for many years - will they be okay sharing their journey. Normally, the answer is so often no! But most of my patients were kind and brave enough to share their stories!! I also started a club called freedom from cancer club where in cured patients are made members. These members are already helping our patients on treatment on regular basis.